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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 001233

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EUR/NCE FOR ATRATENSEK, EUR/ERA FOR GIAUQUE, ISN/RA FOR
RNEPHEW, IO/T FOR HVONBEHREN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2012
TAGS: [EZ](#) [EUN](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [KVPR](#)
SUBJECT: CZECH COMMENTS IN ADVANCE OF THE EU GAERC

REF: A. STATE 151038
[1](#)B. STATE 156474

Classified By: Polec Counselor Michael Dodman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Emboff met with Vaclav Balek, Director of the Department of Common Foreign and Security Policy prior to the November 19 EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). Of note were his comments on the Western Balkans, Iran, the EUFOR Chad-RCA mission and upcoming Summits with China, Africa and India. End summary.

Western Balkans

[1](#)2. (C) Balek noted that in addition to the GAERC discussion on November 19, EU Troika representative Wolfgang Ischinger will brief the EU Political Directors on Sunday evening regarding the Troika talks on Kosovo. According to Balek, there will be an informal discussion of possible scenarios following the December 10 conclusion of Troika talks as well as a discussion about the establishment of an EU ESDP mission. On legal grounds, Balek does not think the EU will have problems with the establishment of such a mission since UNSC resolution 1244 allows for such, but the establishment of an International Civilian Office, according to Balek, may be "tricky."

[1](#)3. (C) As noted last month, Balek does not anticipate that EU consensus to recognize Kosovo will be possible, especially given the positions of Cyprus and Greece. He also believes that the international community will have some time this winter to address the Kosovo situation after the Troika talks conclude since he believes an immediate unilateral declaration of independence by the Kosovars is unlikely and the Kosovars will be flexible about the date of such a declaration, as long as they continue to believe that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Iran

[1](#)4. (C) Iran will be discussed by the EU Foreign Ministers over lunch and this is expected to be a lengthy discussion given recent developments, EU High Rep Solana's return from the Middle East and the anticipated release of Solana's report. Balek noted that if it appears that a third UNSC resolution will not be possible, the UK and France are likely to take the lead on developing EU measures to increase international pressure on Iran. Balek noted that Germany's support will be key to garnering EU unanimity on such measures, but he anticipates that Chancellor Merkel, who will take a hit from German businesses for supporting such EU measures, will go along in the end. On a related note, he

mentioned that at the upcoming EU-China summit, the EU does plan to press China on the issue of Iran.

ESDP Mission to Chad

15. (C) The EU Ministers plan to discuss the EUFOR Chad-RCA operation during the GAERC, with a number of countries expected to provide details about their contributions to the mission. The Czech Republic will announce that they will provide three people to the mission, who will serve at the operation center's headquarters. This involvement in missions to Africa is a first for the Czechs, who do not have historic or strategic ties to the continent. Balek indicated that the Czechs decided to take this step in order to increase cooperation and strengthen their ties with France. (Note: the Czechs are working ever more closely with the French and the Swedes since together they form an upcoming EU Presidency troika. End Note.)

Summits

16. (C) The upcoming EU summits with China, Africa and India, are relatively further down the voluminous GAERC agenda priority list. As mentioned above, Balek did confirm that the EU will raise Iran with China. Regarding the China Arms Embargo, the EU anticipates that China will raise the issue; the EU has no plans to change their current policy, however. On the summit with Africa, Balek spoke candidly about what he considers to be another example of Portugal's mismanagement of the Presidency. He noted that even though France provided suggestions on how to host an EU-Africa summit without Mugabe, Portugal did not take this advice. In response, the

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Czech Republic plans to send Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg in place of Prime Minister Topolanek to the summit. Balek also noted that they have pressed the EU Presidency to leave time on the agenda for a substantive discussion of the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. With respect to the EU-India summit, there will be a wide-ranging discussion covering topics from deepening trade ties to nuclear energy.
Graber